

COMMENDING THE SIGNING OF THE UNITED STATES ADRIATIC CHARTER

MARKUP BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H. Con. Res. 209

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COMMENDING THE SIGNING OF THE UNITED STATES ADRIATIC CHARTER

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2003

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 3:23 p.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Doug Bereuter [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. BEREUTER. The Subcommittee meeting will come to order. Pursuant to notice, I call up the resolution, H. Con. Res. 209, for purposes of a markup. And as soon as our Clerk gets there, we will be okay, and she is working her way there.

The CLERK. H. Con. Res. 209, commending the signing of the United States Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership—

Mr. BEREUTER. Without objection, the resolution will be considered as read and open for amendments at any point.

[H. Con. Res. 209 follows:]

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 209

Commending the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 5, 2003

Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. BEREUTER, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. SHIMKUS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia.

Whereas the United States has an enduring interest in the independence, territorial integrity, and security of Albania, Croatia, and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and supports their full integration in the community of democratic Euro-Atlantic states;

Whereas Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia have taken clear and positive steps to advance their integration into Europe by establishing close cooperative relations among themselves and with their neighbors, as well as their promotion of regional cooperation;

Whereas Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia have already contributed to European security and to the peace and security of southeast Europe through the resolution of conflicts in the region and their regional cooperation in the Southeast Europe Defense Ministerial;

Whereas on May 2, 2003, the United States-Adriatic Charter was signed in Tirana, Albania, by Secretary of State Colin Powell, Albanian Foreign Minister Ilir Meta, Croatian Foreign Minister Tonino Picula, and Macedonian Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva;

Whereas the Adriatic Charter affirms the commitment of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to the values and principles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and to joining the Alliance at the earliest possible time;

Whereas Secretary of State Powell stated that the Adriatic Charter “reaffirms our partners’ dedication to work individually, with each other, and with their neighbors to build a region of strong democracies powered by free market economies . . . [i]t underscores the importance we place on their eventual full integration into NATO and other European institutions . . . [a]nd most importantly, the Charter promises to strengthen the ties that bind the peoples of the region to the United States, to one another, and to a common future within the Euro-Atlantic family”; and

Whereas 75 commandos of the armed forces of the Republic of Albania were sent to Iraq as part of the coalition forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom as a sign of its commitment to promote international freedom and security: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That Congress—

3 (1) strongly supports the United States-Adriatic
4 Charter and commends Albania, Croatia, and Mac-
5 edonia for their continued efforts to become full-
6 fledged members of the North Atlantic Treaty Orga-
7 nization (NATO) and the European Union;

8 (2) urges NATO to invite Albania, Croatia, and
9 Macedonia to join NATO as soon as these countries
10 demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibilities
11 of NATO membership;

12 (3) welcomes and supports the aspirations of
13 Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join the Euro-
14 pean Union at the earliest opportunity;

15 (4) recognizes that Albania, Croatia, and Mac-
16 edonia are making important strides to bring their
17 economic, military, and political institutions into
18 conformance with the standards of NATO and other
19 Euro-Atlantic institutions; and

20 (5) commends Secretary of State Powell for his
21 personal support of the Adriatic Charter.

○

Mr. BEREUTER. I have an opening statement. The resolution before us expresses the support of Congress for the Adriatic Charter. The charter was signed on May 2, 2003 in the Albanian capital of Tirana by Secretary of State Powell and the foreign ministers of Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the three remaining NATO aspirant countries which were not invited to begin accession negotiations with the Alliance at the 2002 Prague Summit.

I thank my colleague, the distinguished gentleman from New York, Mr. Engel, for authoring this legislation and for working with the Subcommittee staff and me. Mr. Engel has long been a champion of Albania in the House and Albania-American relations, and the Adriatic Charter represents one more step for Albania as well as for Croatia and Macedonia in their journey toward full membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO and the European Union.

The Adriatic Charter pledges the United States to support efforts by Albania, Croatia and Macedonia to join NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions. In this agreement the three aspirant nations commit themselves to accelerate their democratic reforms, protect human rights, implement market-oriented economic policies and enhance their mutual cooperation.

Under the Adriatic Charter, the United States and these three countries pledge to consult whenever the security of one of them is threatened. For their part, the aspirant countries promise to continue defense reforms and undertake steps to enhance border security so they can contribute to regional stability. This is a very important step forward.

Some of the language in the Adriatic Charter might look familiar. Indeed, this document was based on the successful Baltic Charter, which was signed in 1998 with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Five years ago few observers would have been so bold as to predict that those three countries, occupied for 50 years by the Soviet Union and then Russia, would be poised to join NATO and the EU next year.

The Baltic Charter signifies an American commitment to help those three countries in their successful efforts to join NATO and the EU. Today the Adriatic Charter holds the potential for helping Albania, Croatia and Macedonia achieve the same goals.

I would like to recognize the efforts of Secretary of State Powell and our diplomats working in the European and Eurasian Bureau of the State Department for their initiative in crafting the Adriatic Charter. As NATO prepares to admit seven new countries next year, it is important that these three remaining candidate countries are not forgotten. NATO's door remains open to all who are willing and able to assume the responsibilities of membership, and it is important that the Congress assert that it is the achievements of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia that will determine when their aspirations for accession will be realized.

The Adriatic Charter is also one more step toward President Bush's goal of a Europe whole and free from the Baltic to the Black Sea. I commend and congratulate the people of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia for their initiative and progress, and I urge approve of this resolution.

And I am pleased now to turn to the Ranking Member, Mr. Wexler, and perhaps then to the initiator of the legislation.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Bereuter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DOUG BEREUTER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEBRASKA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE

The resolution before us expresses the support of the Congress for the Adriatic Charter. The charter was signed on May 2, 2003, in the Albanian capital of Tirana by Secretary of State Powell and the foreign ministers of Albania, Croatia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the three remaining NATO aspirant nations, which were not invited to begin accession negotiations with the Alliance at the 2002 Prague Summit.

I thank my colleague, the distinguished gentleman from New York, Mr. Engel, for authoring this legislation and for working with the subcommittee staff and me.

Mr. Engel has long been a champion of Albania in this House, and the Adriatic Charter represents one more step for Albania, as well as for Croatia and Macedonia, in their journey toward full membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO and the European Union.

The Adriatic Charter pledges the United States to support efforts by Albania, Croatia and Macedonia to join NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions. In this agreement, the three aspirant nations commit themselves to accelerate their democratic reforms, protect human rights, implement market-oriented economic policies, and enhance their mutual cooperation.

Under the Adriatic Charter, the United States and these three countries pledge to consult whenever the security of one of them is threatened. For their part, the aspirant countries promise to continue defense reforms and undertake steps to enhance border security, so they can contribute to regional stability.

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The Adriatic Charter is also one more step toward President Bush's goal of a Europe whole and free from the Baltic to the Black Sea. I commend and congratulate the people of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia for their initiative and progress, and I urge approval of this resolution.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Wexler.

Mr. WEXLER. I will defer to Mr. Engel.

Mr. BEREUTER. Very well. Mr. Engel, you are recognized and thank you for your initiative.

Mr. ENGEL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank both you and your staff for your cooperation and support as we drafted this resolution, and I would also like to thank Mr. Wexler for his support and cooperation.

On May 2, 2003, the USA Adriatic Charter was signed in Tirana, Albania by Secretary of State Colin Powell and the foreign ministers of Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As Secretary Powell pointed out when he signed the document, the fact that the agreement was signed in Albania, once

a country known only for its isolation and distance from Western principles, is remarkable.

Today Tirana is a capital filled with energy as it continues its opening to Europe. I recall the first time I went to Tirana in 1992 I didn't know what to expect, because I had known that the people of Albania had been fed a steady diet of anti-American propaganda with the previous regimes, a dictatorship for so many years, and instead I found people that were cheering in the streets and shouting USA, USA, and I have always said that of all the peoples I have met all over the world, there are no people that are more pro-American than the Albanian people, be it whether they are in Albania, Kosova, Macedonia, Montenegro or in the United States.

Macedonia and Croatia have seen similar changes as Albania has, filled with energy, and continues its opening to Europe. As NATO has expanded to other countries of Europe, several former Yugoslav nations in South Central Europe were excluded. They just were not ready for membership. Today three of those nations, Albania, Croatia and Macedonia, are moving to make the needed changes and reforms so that all three can join the North Atlantic structures.

The United States-Adriatic Charter represents a commitment by these three countries, Albania, Croatia and Macedonia, to the values and principles of NATO and a declaration of their intent to join NATO as soon as they meet alliance standards. I strongly support their efforts to advance toward NATO membership, and having Secretary Powell sign the charter puts the United States firmly in support of their efforts to join NATO when they are ready.

By passing this resolution today, Congress will add its voice by, and I quote, urging NATO to invite Albania, Croatia and Macedonia to join NATO as soon as these countries demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership.

H. Con. Res. 209 also welcomes and supports the aspirations of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia to join the European Union at the earliest opportunity and recognizes that the three countries are making important strides to bring their economic, military and political institutions into conformance with the standards of NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Finally, our resolution also commends Secretary Powell for his strong personal support of the resolution, as demonstrated by his travel to the region to sign the document.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I think that this is an appropriate forum to publicly thank Albania for sending 75 commandos to Iraq to fight alongside our troops. It is my hope that Albania, one of only three European countries to send ground troops, would be high on our Defense Department's list when it considers the realignment of and new bases for American forces around the world.

Again, I want to thank both the Chairman and Ranking Member for their support and urge this Subcommittee to adopt this resolution and report it favorably to the Full Committee. And I yield back my time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Engel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ELIOT L. ENGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and your staff for your cooperation and support as we drafted this resolution, H.Con.Res. 209. I would also like to thank the Ranking Member, Mr. Wexler, for his support.

On May 2, 2003, the U.S. Adriatic Charter was signed in Tirana, Albania by Secretary of State Colin Powell and the Foreign Ministers of Albania, Croatia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As Secretary Powell pointed out when he signed the document, the fact that the agreement was signed in Albania, once a country known only for its isolation and distance from Western principles, is remarkable. Today, Tirana is a capital filled with energy as it continues its opening to Europe. Macedonia and Croatia have seen similar changes.

As NATO has expanded through other countries of Europe, several former Yugoslav nations in South Central Europe were excluded. They just were not ready for membership. Today, three of those nations, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia are now moving to make the needed changes and reforms so that they can join the North Atlantic structures.

The U.S. Adriatic Charter represents a commitment by Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to the values and principles of NATO and a declaration of their intent to join NATO as soon as they meet Alliance standards. I strongly support their efforts to advance toward NATO membership and having Secretary Powell sign the Charter puts the United States firmly in support of their efforts to join NATO when they are ready.

By passing this resolution today, Congress will add its voice, by "urg[ing] NATO to invite Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join NATO as soon as these countries demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership."

H.Con.Res. 209 also welcomes and supports the aspirations of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join the European Union at the earliest opportunity and recognizes that the three countries are making important strides to bring their economic, military, and political institutions into conformance with the standards of NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions. Finally, our resolution also commends Secretary Powell for his strong personal support of the resolution, as demonstrated by his travel to the region to sign the document.

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Again, I thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for their support and urge the Subcommittee to adopt this resolution and report it favorably to the full committee.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Engel. I understand that there are no further opening statements.

Are there any amendments to the resolution? If there are no amendments, the Chair would now entertain a motion that the bill be reported favorably to the Full Committee.

Mr. GALLEGLY. So moved.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Gallegly. The question occurs on the motion to report H. Con. Res. 209 favorably. All in favor will say aye. All opposed, no. The motion is approved. The bill is reported favorably. The staff is directed to make any technical and conforming amendments, and I thank my colleagues for their patience and for their assistance in moving this legislation. We will try to get it to the Floor as soon as we can.

The Subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:31 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

